



KACHA AND DEVAYANI

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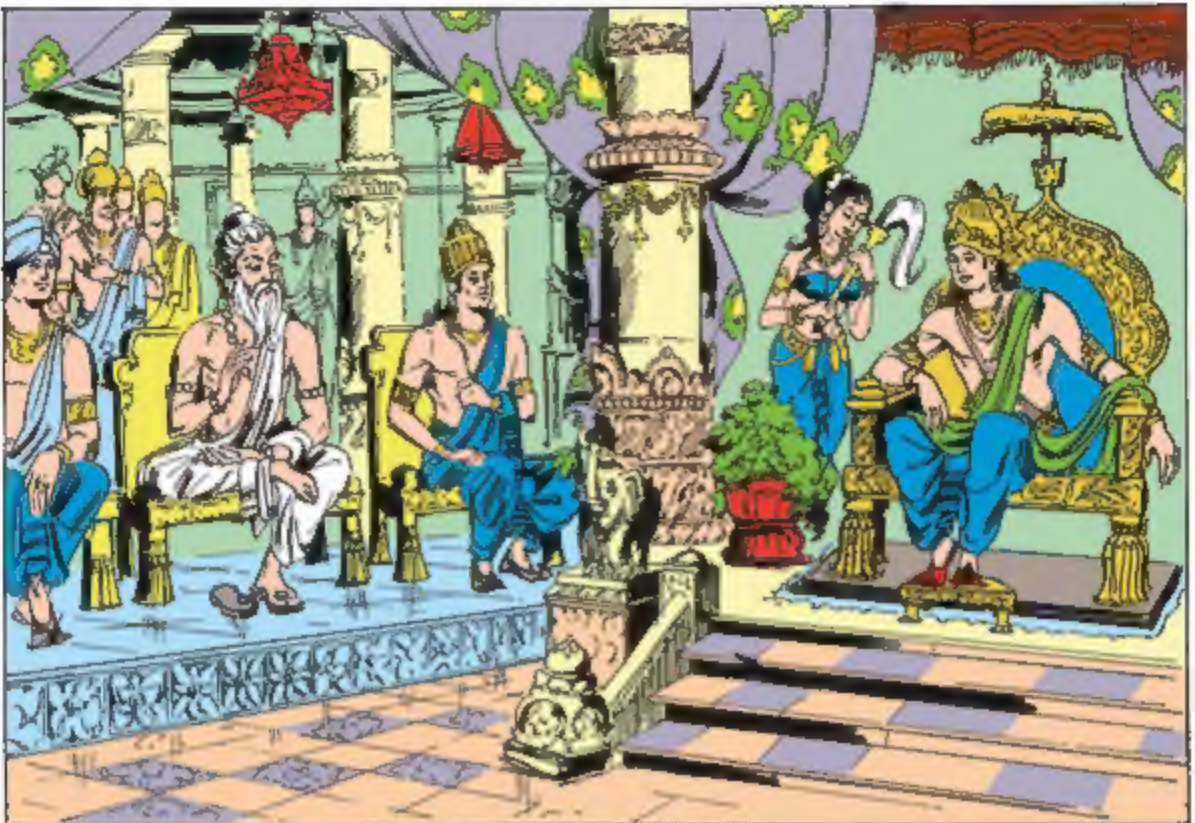
Amar Chitra Katha Pvt Ltd

© Amar Chitra Katha Pvt Ltd, 1972, Reprinted February 2012, ISBN 978-81-8482-000-3
Published & Printed by Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd., The Forum, 3rd Floor,
Raghuvanshi Mill Compound, S.B.Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai- 400 013, India
For Consumer Complaints Contact Tel : +91- 22 40497436
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KACHA DEVAYANI



IN THE DAYS OF YORE, THE DEVAS AND THE ASURAS WERE EVER
STRUGGLING FOR THE LORDSHIP OF THE THREE WORLDS.



BOTH HAD WISE MEN TO GUIDE THEM. BRIHASPATI, THE SON OF SAGE ANGIRAS, LIVED IN THE ABODE OF INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS.



AND SHUKRACHARYA THE FAVOURITE PUPIL OF SAGE ANGIRAS, LIVED IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE ASURA KING, VRISHAPARVA.

BUT OF THE TWO, SHUKRACHARYA ALONE KNEW THE CRAFT OF SANJIVANI, THE SECRET OF REVIVING THE DEAD.

AS LONG AS SHUKRACHARYA IS WITH US, OUR NUMBERS SHALL NEVER DECREASE.



HEAR!

HEAR!

HEAR!



FOR THOSE WHO HAD FALLEN IN BATTLE WERE SIMPLY BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE, TO CONTINUE THE WAR ON THE DEVAS.

THE VALIANT DEVAS, TIRED OF THE UNEQUAL STRUGGLE WENT TO THE BRILLIANT, HANDSOME YOUTH, KACHA, THE SON OF BRIHASPATI.

YOU MUST GO TO SHUKRACHARYA AND LEARN THE CRAFT OF SANJIVANI. ONLY THEN CAN WE VANQUISH OUR SWORN ENEMIES.



THE OBEDIENT AND DUTIFUL KACHA IMMEDIATELY SET OUT TO MEET SHUKRACHARYA.

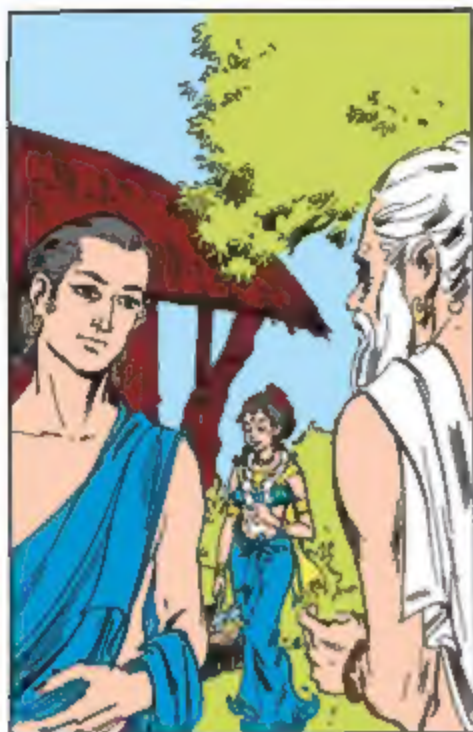


THERE HE HUMBLY PRESENTED HIMSELF BEFORE THE GREAT WISE ONE.



SHUKRACHARYA GAVE HIM A WARM WELCOME.





SHUKRACHARYA HAD A DAUGHTER,
DEVAYANI, WHOM HE LOVED DEARLY.

COME DEVAYANI, MY CHILD.
MEET THE WORTHY KACHA,
WHO HAS VOWED TO BE
MY PUPIL TILL THE PERIOD
OF HIS STUDIES IS OVER.



ALL LEARNING IN THOSE DAYS WAS HANDED DOWN BY WORD OF MOUTH.
THE PUPIL LIVED WITH HIS GURU'S FAMILY AS ONE OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.
IN RETURN FOR HIS EDUCATION, HE SERVED HIS GURU WITH LOVE AND
DEVOTION.



BUT MOST OF THE DAY
SHUKRACHARYA WAS EITHER BUSY
AT COURT...



...OR DEEP IN MEDITATION.



SO KACHA HELPED DEVAYANI
WITH HER DAILY CHORES.



AND TENDERLY FULFILLED HER
SLIGHTEST WISH.

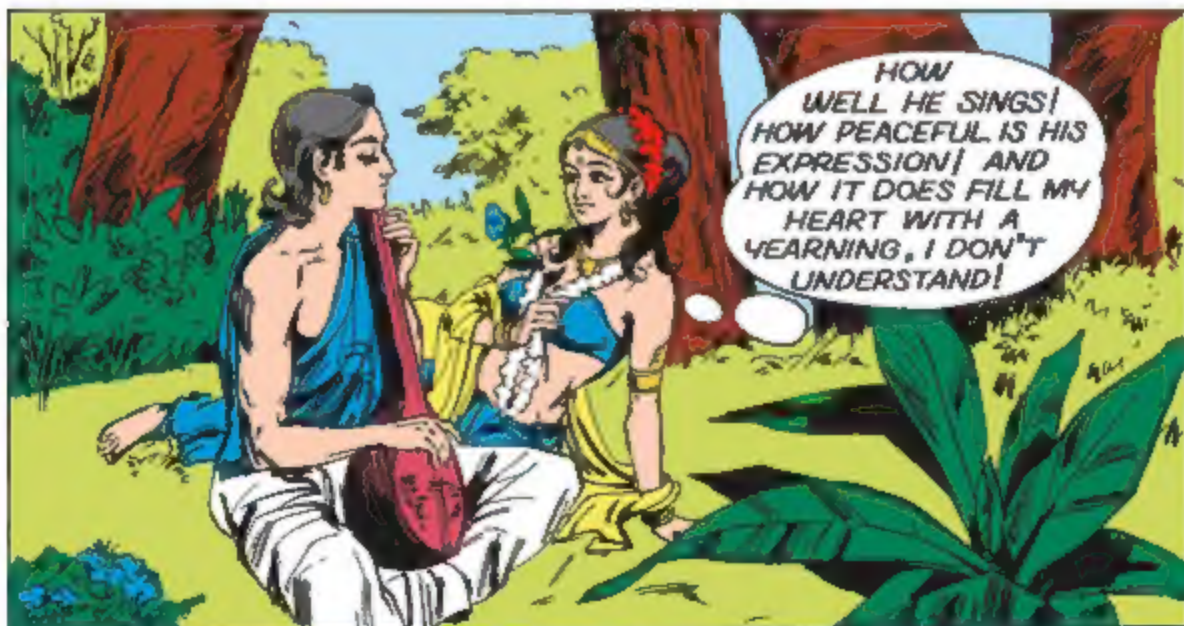


WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF HIS ARRIVAL, KACHA FOUND HIMSELF SPENDING ALL HIS LEISURE HOURS IN THE COMPANY OF THE LIVELY DEVAYANI.



MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE NEVER FAIL TO GIVE ME PLEASURE. DO ANY OF THESE ARTS INTEREST YOU?

I CAN SING, DANCE AND PLAY ANY INSTRUMENT.



HOW WELL HE SINGS! HOW PEACEFUL IS HIS EXPRESSION! AND HOW IT DOES FILL MY HEART WITH A YEARNING. I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

AND KACHA WON HIS WAY INTO DEVAYANI'S HEART.

ONCE TO TEASE HER, KACHA HID HIMSELF AMONG THE TREES.



BUT DEVAYANI COULD NOT EVEN PRETEND TO BE ANGRY FOR LONG.



WHERE IS
KACHA?
IT IS TIME...

I SHALL
CALL HIM.
HE IS WITH
THE CATTLE

AND SO KACHA LIVED AND LEARNED
IN THE HOME OF HIS GURU.

BUT AS THE YEARS PASSED, THE ASURAS BECAME SUSPICIOUS OF KACHA.

IT IS STRANGE! WHY SHOULD
THE SON OF THE LEARNED
BRIHASPATI COME TO OUR
CITY AND CHOOSE SHUKRA-
CHARYA FOR HIS GURU?

I SENSE TREACHERY.
THE ONLY KNOWLEDGE
SHUKRACHARYA HAS,
THAT KACHA'S FATHER
HAS NOT, IS THE SECRET
CRAFT OF SANJIVANI.

ALL THE ASURAS ROSE AS ONE ROARING ANGRILY.



DOWN WITH
THE SLY ONE.

KACHA
MUST DIE.

KACHA
SHALL BE
KILLED.

WAIT! PATIENCE!
WE SHALL HAVE
TO DO THIS IN
SECRECY. A GURU
WILL NOT LET
HIS PUPIL BE
SLAIN.



THE ASURAS WAITED, BUT
IMPATIENTLY. THEN ONE DAY...



THE ASURAS FELL UPON HIM AND SLEW HIM.



THEY CUT HIM INTO PIECES.



AND FED HIS FLESH TO THEIR DOGS.

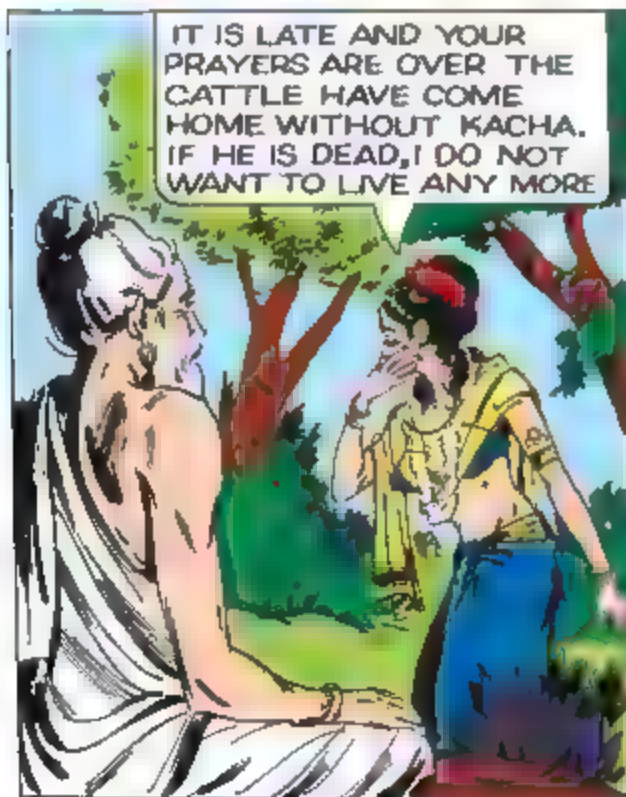


AS USUAL DEVYANI WAITED FOR HIM.

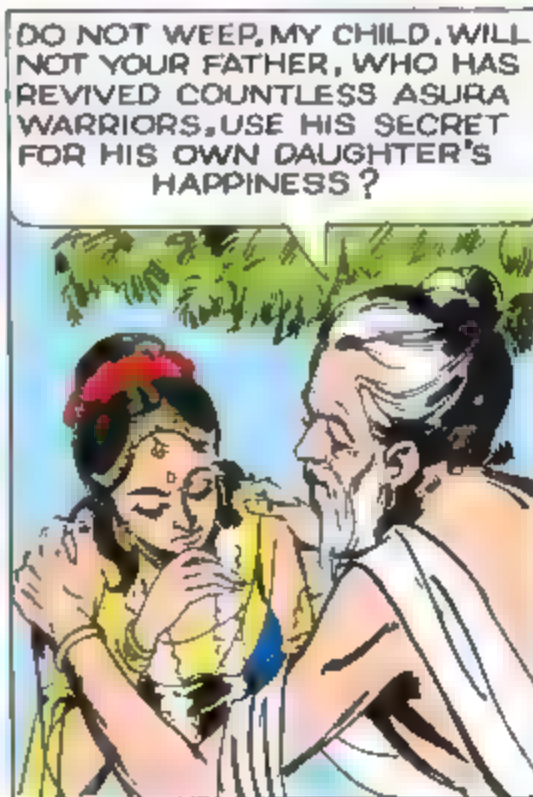




THERE THEY COME!
BUT WHY DO THEY
RETURN WITHOUT KACHA?
A NAMELESS FEAR
GRIPS ME.



IT IS LATE AND YOUR
PRAYERS ARE OVER THE
CATTLE HAVE COME
HOME WITHOUT KACHA.
IF HE IS DEAD, I DO NOT
WANT TO LIVE ANY MORE

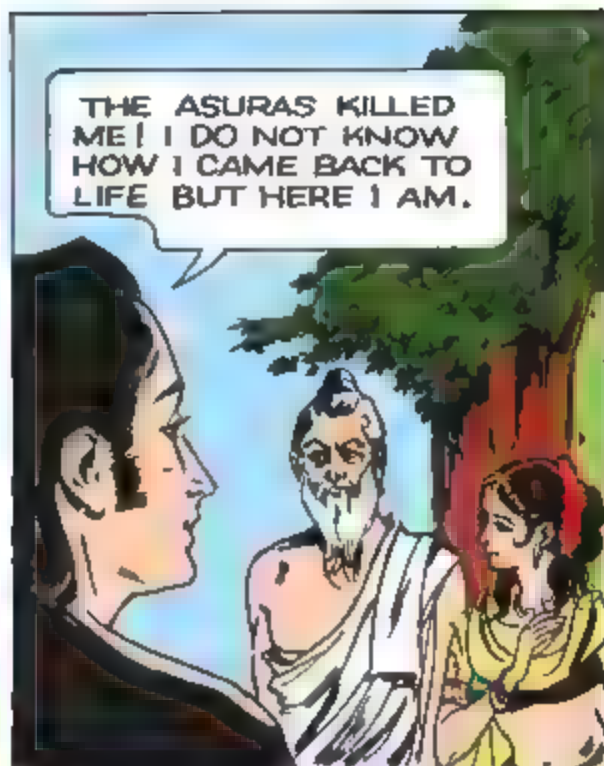


DO NOT WEEP, MY CHILD. WILL
NOT YOUR FATHER, WHO HAS
REVIVED COUNTLESS ASURA
WARRIORS, USE HIS SECRET
FOR HIS OWN DAUGHTER'S
HAPPINESS?

SHUKRACHARYA CLOSED HIS EYES AND LO!



KACHA STOOD BEFORE DEVAYANI.



KACHA CONTINUED LIVING IN THE HOME OF HIS GURU. ONE DAY -

LONG AGO, WHILE WALKING DEEP IN THE FOREST WITH MY FATHER, I HAD SEEN SOME FLOWERS. THEIR PERFUME STILL LINGERS IN MY MEMORY. KACHA, WILL YOU BRING SOME FOR ME? THEY BLOOM ONLY IN THIS SEASON.



SO HE WANDERED DEEP INTO THE FOREST IN SEARCH OF THE FLOWERS.
THE ASURAS WERE WAITING FOR JUST SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY.



THEY WAYLAID HIM AND SLEW HIM.



THIS TIME THEY CARRIED HIS BODY
TO A LONELY SPOT. THEN -

WE SHALL POUND
HIS CARCASS INTO
PASTE AND DISSOLVE
IT IN THE WATERS
OF THE OCEAN.



HOURS LATER AT SHUKRACHARYA'S HOME -

KACHA IS AWAY
LONG ENOUGH TO
COLLECT FLOWERS
FOR TEN MAIDENS.
I WONDER WHAT
KEEPS HIM?

WHY SHOULD I WORRY?
I HAVE ONLY TO TELL
FATHER AND KACHA
WITH MY FLOWERS
WILL STAND BEFORE
ME.

MEANWHILE-

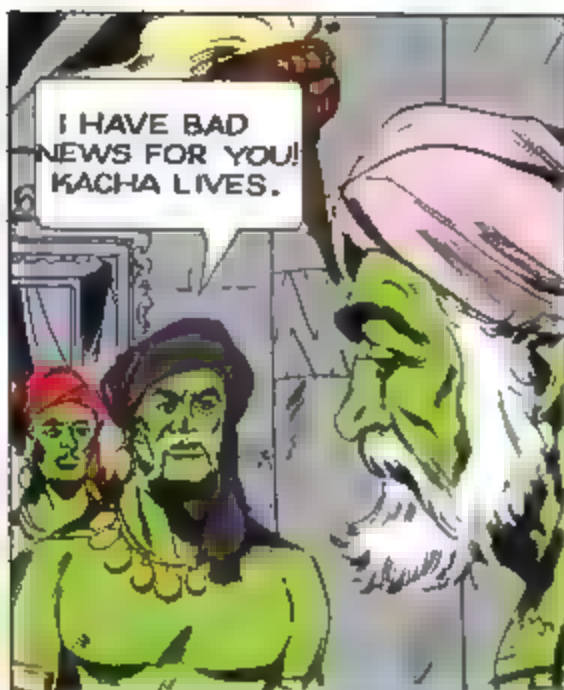
I WONDER WHAT
KEEPS KACHA. IT IS
TIME FOR HIS STUDIES.
AND HE IS PROMPT. FOR
SOME REASON THE
ASURAS WISH TO KILL
MY DISCIPLE. I FEAR
HE IS IN THEIR CLUT-
CHES ONCE AGAIN.

DEVAYANI APPROACHED SHUKRACHARYA
AND HIS SUSPICIONS WERE CONFIRMED.

FATHER !

DO NOT BE
UPSET,
MY CHILD.

ONCE AGAIN HE USED HIS SECRET KNOWLEDGE TO RECALL KACHA.



HIS BODY WAS CREMATED.



THE ASHES WERE CAREFULLY COLLECTED...



... AND MIXED INTO A GOBLET OF WINE.



THE GREYING ASURA THEN TOOK THE GOBLET OF WINE TO SHUKRACHARYA.

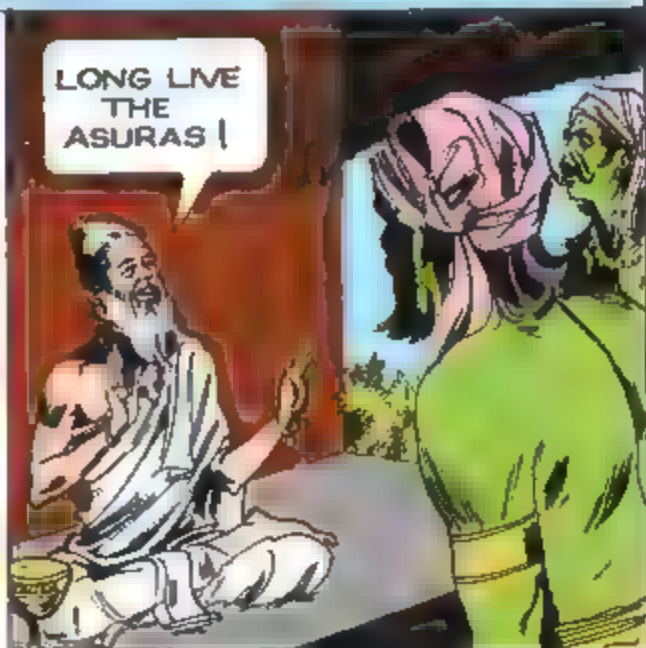
O WISE ONE!
WE BRING YOU
THIS HUMBLE GIFT
IN GRATITUDE FOR
KEEPING OUR
NUMBERS
CONSTANT.



IF SHUKRACHARYA HAD A WEAKNESS IT WAS FOR WINE. HE EMPTIED THE CONTENTS OF THE GOBLET IN ONE GULP.



LONG LIVE
THE
ASURAS!



DEVAYANI WAITED IN VAIN FOR KACHA.



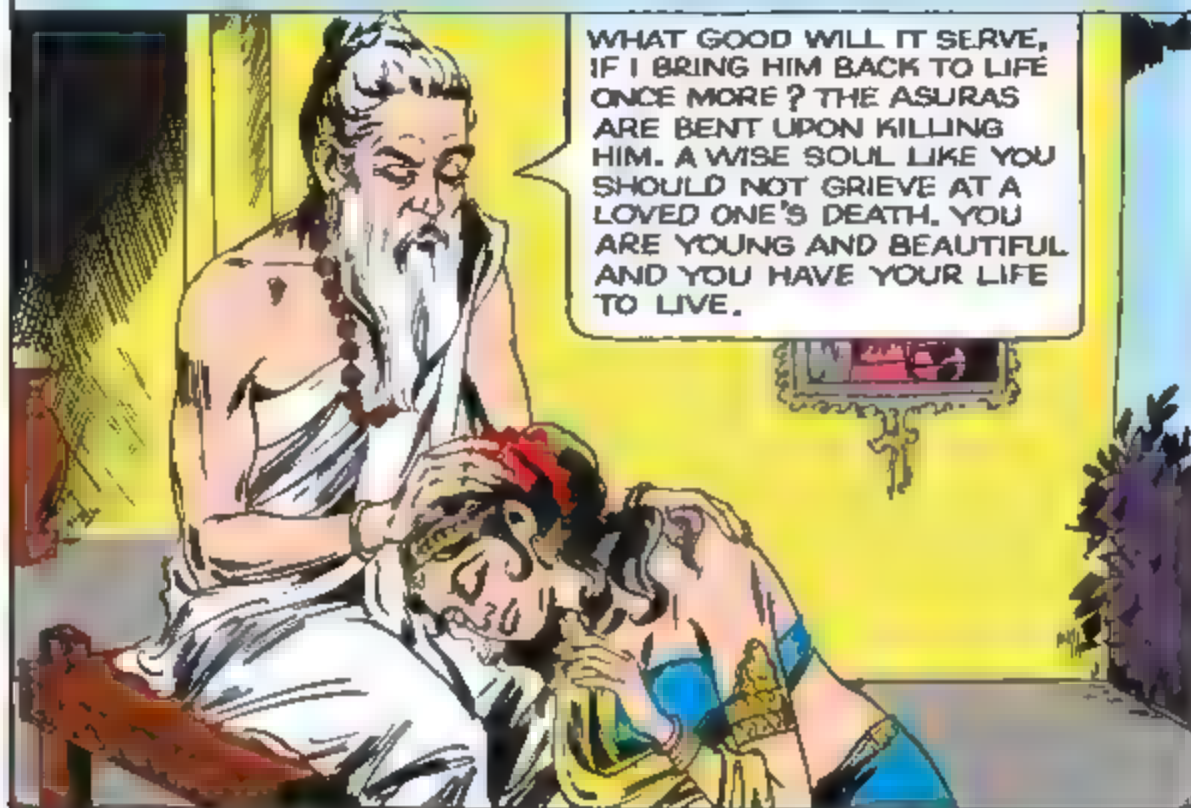
OH KACHA!
HOW MANY MORE
DEATHS WILL YOU
HAVE TO DIE
BEFORE THE ASURAS
LEAVE YOU ALONE?
WILL YOU EVER
BE MINE?

THE CATTLE RETURNED HOME ONCE MORE WITHOUT KACHA.



FATHER!
WITHOUT KACHA
I AM AS GOOD AS
DEAD. PLEASE
BRING HIM BACK
TO LIFE.

SHUKRACHARYA KNEW THE FUTILITY OF RECALLING KACHA FROM THE DEAD.



WHAT GOOD WILL IT SERVE, IF I BRING HIM BACK TO LIFE ONCE MORE? THE ASURAS ARE BENT UPON KILLING HIM. A WISE SOUL LIKE YOU SHOULD NOT GRIEVE AT A LOVED ONE'S DEATH. YOU ARE YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL AND YOU HAVE YOUR LIFE TO LIVE.

BUT DEVAYANI'S LOVE FOR KACHA KNEW NO REASONING.

KACHA WAS A GOOD PUPIL AND LOYAL TO US. I LOVED HIM DEARLY AND NOW THAT HE IS DEAD, I DO NOT WISH TO LIVE.



PLEASE, FATHER, I DON'T WANT TO EAT ANYTHING.



I CAN'T BEAR YOUR SORROW.

*YET AGAIN SHUKRACHARYA USED HIS SECRET KNOWLEDGE AND
CALLED UPON KACHA TO COME BACK TO THE WORLD OF THE LIVING.
KACHA CAME BACK TO LIFE ...*

THE ASURAS KILLED
ME BUT I DO NOT KNOW
HOW I HAPPEN TO
BE INSIDE
YOUR STOMACH.

*...BUT INSIDE
SHUKRACHARYA'S STOMACH.*



SHUKRACHARYA CURSED HIMSELF
FOR DRINKING WINE.

HENCEFORTH
WINE SHALL BE
FORBIDDEN FOR THOSE
ENGAGED IN THE
PURSUIT OF WISDOM.



SHUKRACHARYA, THE WISE ONE
WAS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A
DILEMMA.

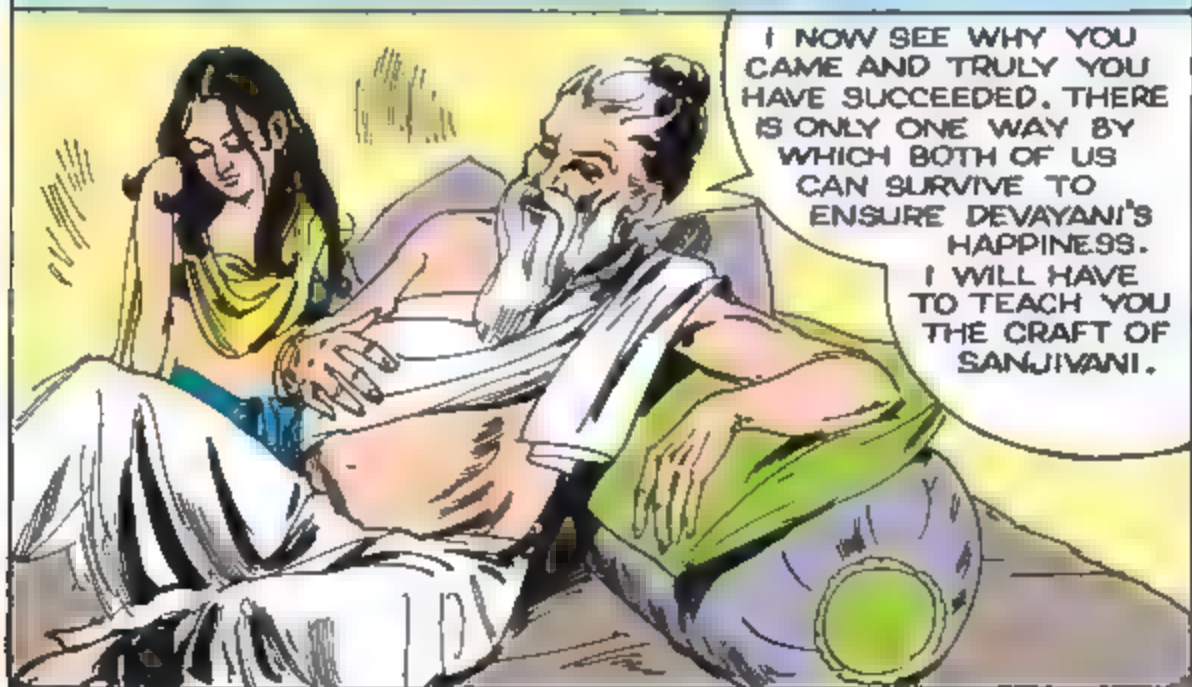
KACHA CAN
COME OUT
ONLY BY
KILLING ME.

BUT FATHER, I
WILL NOT LIVE
IF EITHER OF
YOU DIES.

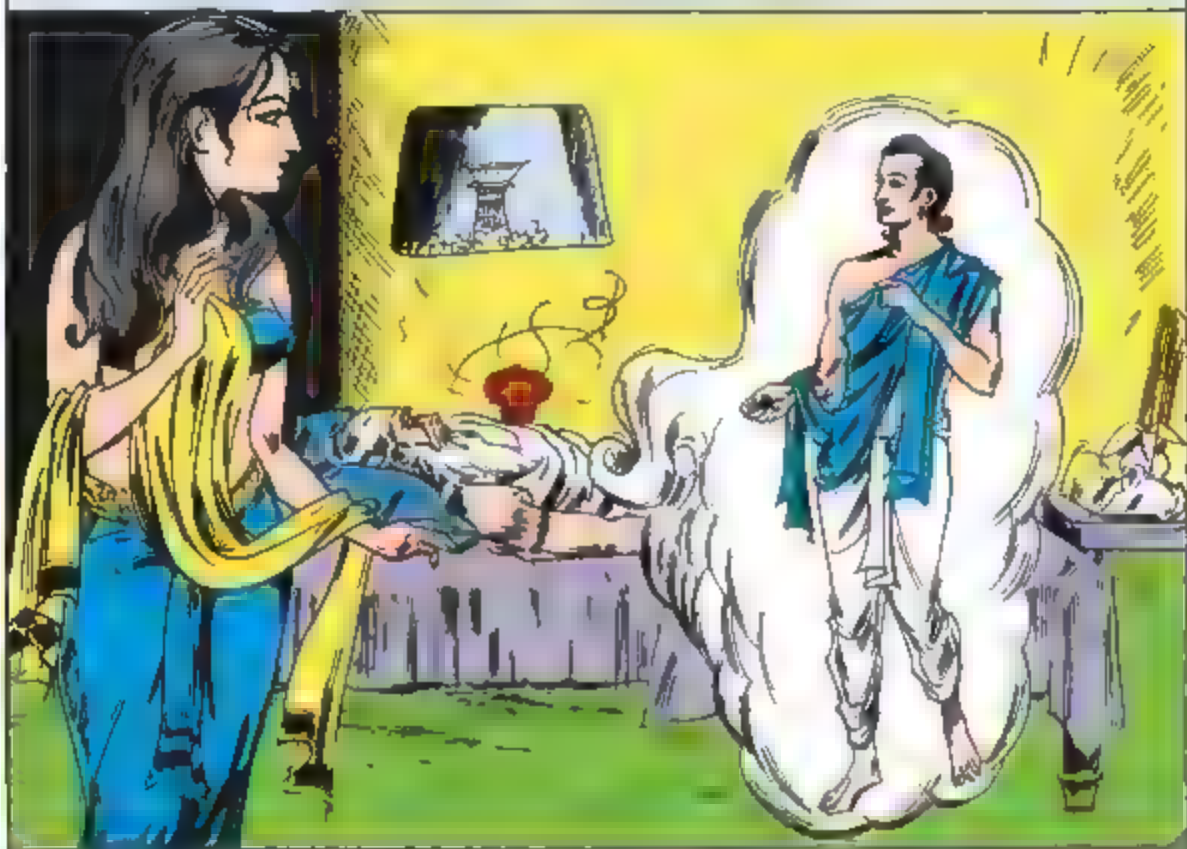


AS SHUKRACHARYA THOUGHT OF A WAY OUT, THE REAL PURPOSE OF KACHA'S
VISIT DAWNED UPON HIM.

I NOW SEE WHY YOU
CAME AND TRULY YOU
HAVE SUCCEEDED. THERE
IS ONLY ONE WAY BY
WHICH BOTH OF US
CAN SURVIVE TO
ENSURE DEVAYANI'S
HAPPINESS.
I WILL HAVE
TO TEACH YOU
THE CRAFT OF
SANJIVANI.



AND SO KACHA LEARNED THE CRAFT FOR WHICH HE HAD COME TO THE HOUSE OF SHUKRACHARYA IN THE CITY OF THE ASURAS AND EMERGED FROM SHUKRACHARYA'S MANGLED BODY.



HE IMMEDIATELY BROUGHT HIS GURU BACK TO LIFE.



SHUKRACHARYA COULD NOT HELP BEING PLEASED WITH HIS PUPIL'S WISDOM.

SHUKRACHARYA THEN WENT TO SEE THE ASURAS.





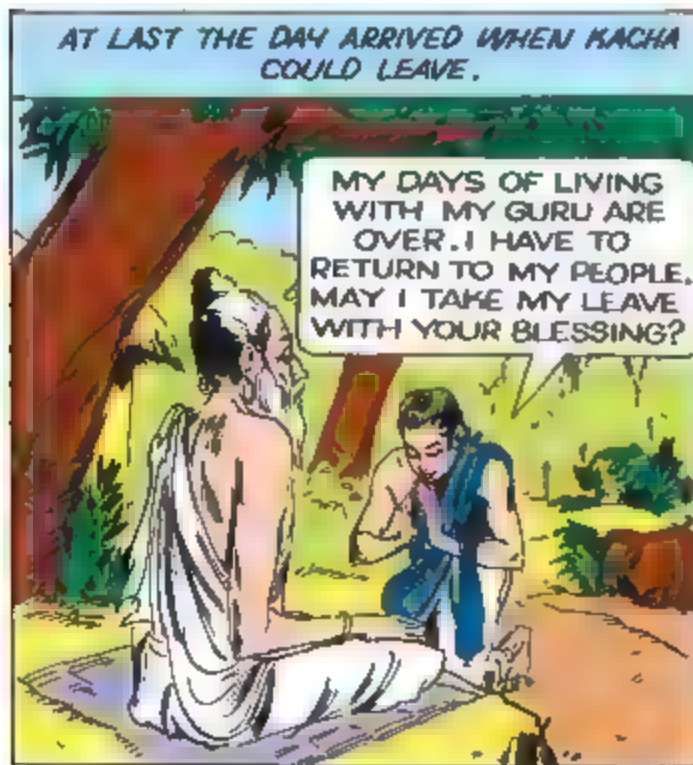
BUT KACHA WAS ONLY WAITING FOR THE FORMAL PERIOD OF HIS STUDIES TO COME TO AN END.

HOW WILL I BREAK THE NEWS TO DEVAYANI? SHE WILL BE HEARTBROKEN. BUT I MUST FULFIL MY DUTIES.



AT LAST THE DAY ARRIVED WHEN KACHA COULD LEAVE.

MY DAYS OF LIVING WITH MY GURU ARE OVER. I HAVE TO RETURN TO MY PEOPLE. MAY I TAKE MY LEAVE WITH YOUR BLESSING?



DOES DEVAYANI KNOW OF HIS DECISION? I WONDER!



NEXT KACHA WENT TO DEVAYANI. SHE WAS FONDLING A DEER IN HER GARDEN.

I KNEW HE WOULD COME.
FROM TO-DAY HE IS
FREE TO MARRY.
HIS PERIOD OF
LEARNING IS OVER.
HE MAY NOW
BECOME A
HOUSEHOLDER

DEVAYANI!

BUT DEVAYANI'S SMILES WERE SOON TO DISSOLVE INTO TEARS.

DEVAYANI, I HAVE COME
TO TAKE MY LEAVE OF YOU.
MY PERIOD OF STUDIES IS
OVER AND I MUST RETURN
TO MY PEOPLE TO FULFIL
MY DUTIES.

NOBLE KACHA! WHILE YOU WERE A STUDENT, I LOVED YOU, BUT COULD NOT SPEAK OUT. NOW THAT YOU ARE FREE TO MARRY WILL YOU NOT TAKE ME FOR YOUR WIFE?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE HAPPY DAYS WE HAVE SHARED? WHY DO YOU STAND ALOOF? HAVE I WRONGED YOU IN ANY WAY?



KACHA HELD DEVAYANI'S HAND TENDERLY.

PEERLESS ONE! I WAS REBORN IN YOUR FATHER'S STOMACH. I AM THEREFORE YOUR BROTHER. I CAN'T MARRY YOU, I MUST RETURN.

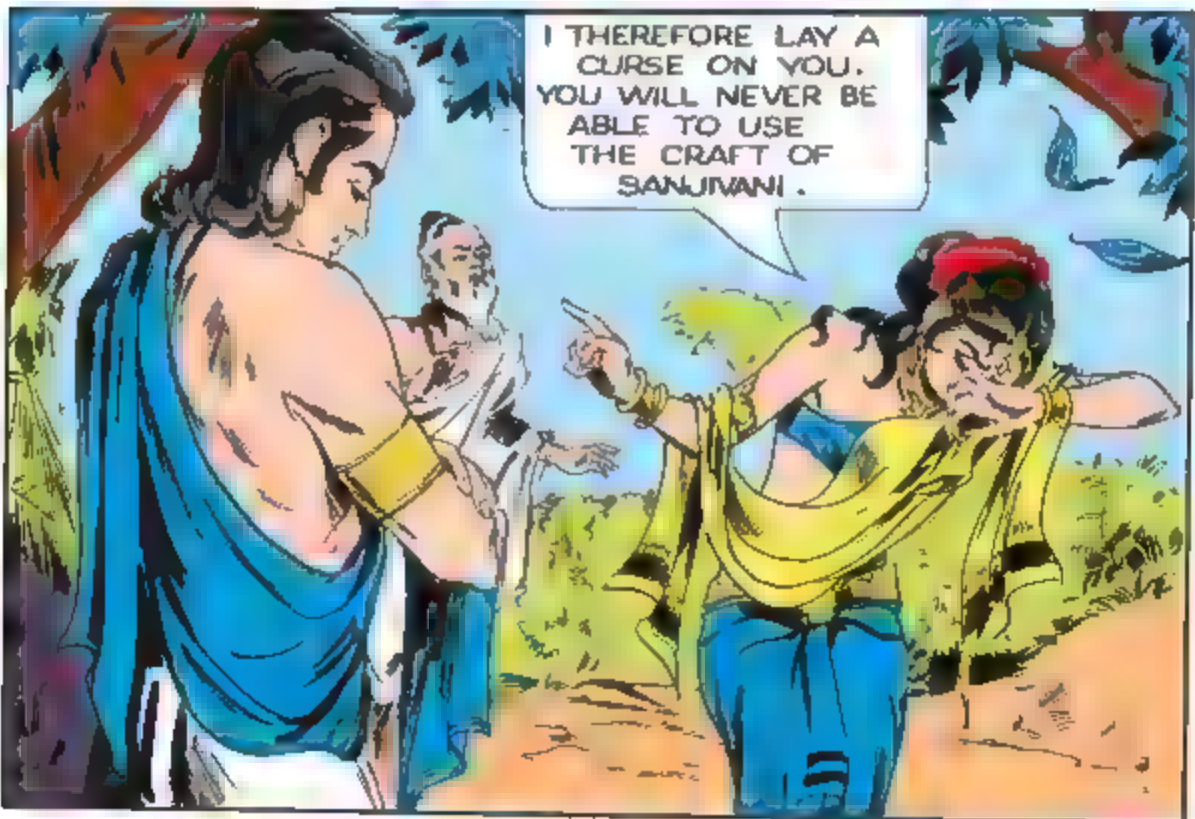


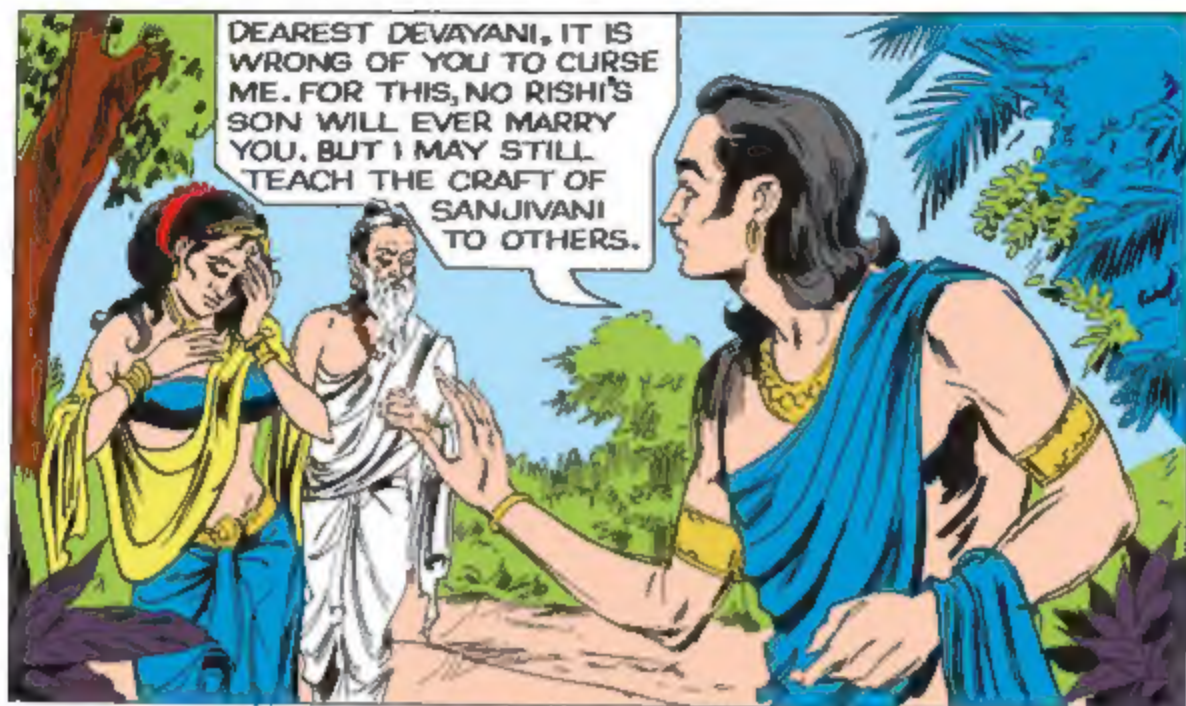
THE BROKEN-HEARTED DEVAYANI CRIED OUT IN HER GRIEF.

YOU MADE
USE OF ONE WHO
WAS SINLESS IN
HER DEVOTION
TO YOU.



I THEREFORE LAY A
CURSE ON YOU.
YOU WILL NEVER BE
ABLE TO USE
THE CRAFT OF
SANJIVANI.

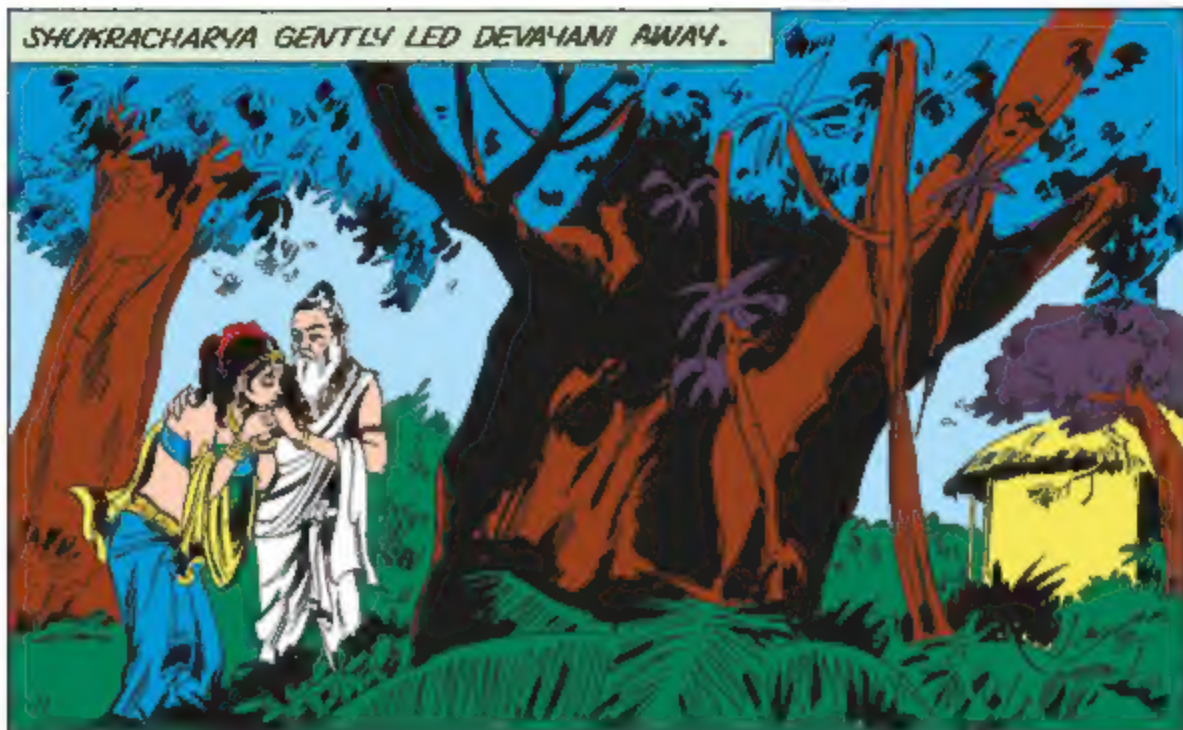




THEN KACHA DEPARTED FOR THE ABODE OF INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS.



SHUKRACHARYA GENTLY LED DEVAYANI AWAY.



WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME, DEVAYANI COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF KACHA.

MAY I JOIN
SHARMISHTHA
AND THE OTHERS
AT THE POOL ?

CERTAINLY !
YOU MAY, MY
CHILD ! BUT BE
CAREFUL.



AND SHE LIVED HAPPILY WITH HER FATHER AND HER PLAYMATES
IN THE CITY OF VRISHAPARVA, KING OF THE ASURAS.



KACHA AND DEVAYANI

While the war was raging between the devas and asuras, the devas sent Kacha to the preceptor of the asuras. Kacha approached the asura guru as a student. It was in this background of hate, war and rivalry that the beautiful Devayani, the proud daughter, of the asura guru, fell in love with Kacha, the man who was being watched by the asuras with increasing suspicion – they knew Kacha was seeking the key to immortality from their guru. Then a twist in the tale throws the dreams of the young couple into disarray.

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YAYATI



NAHUSHA



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ISBN 81-8462-000-3



9 788184 820003